DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 457 706 FL 801 461

AUTHOR	Burt, Miriam, Ed.
TITLE	NCLEnotes, 2000-2001.
INSTITUTION	National Clearinghouse for ESL Literacy Education, Washington, DC.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Vocational and Adult Education (ED), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	2000-00-00
NOTE	18p.
AVAILABLE FROM	NCLE/CAL, 4646 40th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20016. For full text: http://www.cal.org/ncle/NCLENOTE.htm.
PUB TYPE	Collected Works - Serials (022) -- ERIC Publications (071)
JOURNAL CIT	NCLCnotes; v9 n1-2 Sum 2000-Win 2000/2001
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Adults; Citizenship Education; Civics; *English (Second Language); Immigrants; Internet; Land Settlement; *Literacy Education; Refugees; Second Language Instruction; Second Language Learning

ABSTRACT

This newsletter is designed to be of help to the English as a second language community. This volume includes the following articles and features: "Stress: Helping Refugees Cope"; "BEST Gets Better"; "Integrating English Literacy and Civics"; "Summit Stirs Many Into Action"; "TESOL-AEIS on the Internet"; "Civics for Adult Immigrants"; "BEST Gets Computerized"; "Adult Literacy Action Agenda is Launched"; "Connect and Get Answers--on NIFL-ESL"; "NCLE On the Move"; "Resource Updates"; "Her NCLE's Worth"; "News Notes"; and "Book Shelf." (Adjunct ERIC for ESL Literacy Education) (KFT)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 457 706

NCLEnotes, 2000-2001

Miriam Burt, Editor

Volume 9, Numbers 1-2
Summer 2000-Winter 2000/2001

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

- This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
- Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality

- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

FL 801 461

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

NCLEnotes

Vol. 9, No. 1 • Summer 2000

NATIONAL CLEARINGHOUSE FOR ESL LITERACY EDUCATION www.cal.org/ncle

Stress: Helping Refugees Cope

English as a second language (ESL) teachers are often among the first people available to help refugees and other immigrants cope with a new cultural and linguistic environment. Although the identified role of the teacher is to teach English language skills, the teacher's role as a cultural broker can be just as important. This article discusses stresses that occur with resettlement and what ESL teachers can do to help their students adjust to a new life in an unfamiliar culture.

Stress Experienced in Resettlement

Stress occurs when the burdens imposed on people by events or pressures in their lives exceed their resources to cope. For refugees, resettlement involves three types of stress:

Migration stress. When migration occurs suddenly as a result of political violence, war, or other catastrophes, refugees are attempting to function under conditions out of their control. Moreover, many of the losses associated with migration represent the loss of the usual resources—such as family, friends, and community—that people ordinarily rely on.

Acculturation stress. Immigrants and refugees often do not expect that the very fabric of life around them will be profoundly different in the new culture. Ways in which people relate to each other and form and sustain friendships will be different, and how children go to schools and are socialized change. Even the most simple of daily tasks, such as shopping for food or asking for directions, can become challenges involving not only language barriers, but also the potential for deep cultural misunderstandings.

Traumatic stress results from extreme events that cause harm, injury, or death of loved ones, such as natural disasters, accidents, assault, war-related experiences, and torture. It is inevitable that individuals suffering such events will be changed by that experience, and research suggests that these changes will be psychological, social, and physical.

Heed Cultural Differences

Concepts of mental health are laden with cultural bias. The societies where many of the refugees and immigrants to the United States come from tend to be more collectivistic than U.S. society. In the United States, parents rear their children to be independent and self-reliant, to leave home early, and to be responsible for their own happiness and well being. In collectivist societies, parents raise their children to be interdependent and responsible for others, within a system of relationships where others in turn care for them. Behaving in individualistic ways could be seen as dysfunctional in these other societies. Because of these cultural differences, U.S. teachers of refugee adults must be cautious in passing judgment on behaviors they may not understand.

Continued on page 6

inside

News Notes ____ 2
Resource Updates ____ 4
NCLE Publications ____ 7

Her NCLE's Worth

In this issue of NCLEnotes *we are inaugurating a new column. In "Her (or "His") NCLE's Worth" we will talk with a practitioner in the field of English for speakers of other languages (ESOL). Our first interview is with Janet Isserlis, Director of the Literacy Resources Center at Brown University and NCLE board member.*

Miriam Burt: How did you get started in ESOL?

Janet Isserlis: It was in the summer of 1980 here in Providence, Rhode Island. I was completing my MAT in art and working as a cashier in a convenience store. I started talking to a guy who came to the store carrying a baby on his back. He was Bill Shuey, the Executive Director of Project Persona, an ESOL center in Providence. I volunteered at Persona's ESOL program for Southeast Asian refugees that summer, became a paid teacher, and stayed there for 12 years before I moved to Vancouver, BC.

MB: And a lot happened in those 12 years...

JI: Yes. Project Persona merged with the International Institute of Providence in the mid 1980s. I got my second Masters

Continued on page 8

NCLE is an adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse at the Center for Applied Linguistics CAL in Washington, DC.

News Notes

What's her job?

BEST Gets Better

A prototype computer-assisted oral assessment instrument successfully completed its pilot testing recently at the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL). Based on the Basic English Skills Test (BEST) and similar to the BEST oral interview, this one-on-one oral assessment uses the computer to prompt the examiner with test tasks within specified content domains and at appropriate difficulty levels for the examinees. The adaptability of the test allows the examiner to probe what the examinee knows and decreases the time needed to accurately determine language proficiency. CAL hopes to develop a fully operational instrument as well as a print-based version suitable for use in programs with little or no access to technology.

What's wrong with this woman?

Integrating English Literacy and Civics

The U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education has awarded 12 grants, totaling $6.9 million, to test ways of better combining instruction in English and civics. Programs in California, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia will participate in the 2-year study. "Language and civic life are often joined in the real world, and it certainly makes sense that they be joined in the instruction made available to our immigrant neighbors," stated U.S. Secretary of Education Richard W. Riley. For more information on the grants and the programs, see the press release on the Department of Education's website at http://www.ed.gov/PressReleases/05-2000/0510b.html.

Summit Stirs Many Into Action

In February, over 150 adult learners, practitioners, administrators, and researchers from the field of adult education and literacy assembled in Washington, DC, to initiate the process of building a national consensus on how to move adult and family literacy forward in the 21st century. They call it the National Literacy Summit 2000.

The Summit is an effort to develop a vision and action agenda of adult language and literacy programming and instruction in the United States. It was organized by a steering committee of members from the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy (NCSALL), National Coalition for Literacy (NCL), National Council of State Directors for Adult Education, National Institute for Literacy (NIFL), and the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE).

Members of the Adult Education Interest Section (AEIS) of TESOL have made recommendations regarding the action agenda for adult English language learners. They include the following:

- Language development as well as literacy need to be national priorities;
- English language learners as a group need to be served by adult programs, and their differences from adult basic education (ABE) learners need to be taken into account; and
- The program standards developed by TESOL should be used as the basis for evaluating program quality.

The Summit organizers plan to release a foundation paper on the state of the adult education and literacy field and a detailed action agenda. The target date is September 8, 2000, International Literacy Day.

For more information on the Summit, see its website at http://www.nifl.gov/nifl/summit.html. NCLE staff are working with TESOL and other adult ESL professionals to write a paper articulating the vision and action agenda for adult English language learners. The paper will be completed in November 2000. To read drafts and contribute your voice to the effort to improve services for this population, visit NCLE's website at http://www.cal.org/ncle/summit.htm.

TESOL-AEIS on the Internet

The Adult Education Interest Section (AEIS) of TESOL wants to help members stay better connected via the Internet. A new listserv centering around concerns of TESOL members whose work focuses on ESOL/EFL for adults has been humming along since the TESOL 2000 conference in March. If you are a member of TESOL and the AEIS, you can join the discussions by going to the subscription box on the current AEIS web page (http://www.tesol.org/isaffil/intsec/f-ae.html).

NCLE on the Move
Spring 2000

What do NCLE staff members do besides writing digests and books and providing valuable Web services? Well, when they're not creating at their computers, they're usually on the move....

Joy Peyton participated in a Department of Education briefing in Washington, DC, on the *New Presidential Directive on International Education Policy* and joined one of its working groups, whose focus is "expanding high-quality foreign language, English, and culture learning" (May).

Miriam Burt gave a presentation on *Effective Practices in Adult ESL Instruction* at the Working for America Institute (AFL-CIO) Convention in New York (May) and one on *Problem-Solving Activities for Adult English Language Learners* at the Laubach Literacy Biennial Convention in Orlando, Florida (June).

Carol Van Duzer facilitated a session for adult education ESOL teachers on *Reconciling Best Practices With Legislative Reporting Requirements* at the Sunshine State TESOL conference in Daytona Beach, Florida. She also spoke on *Assessment in Adult ESOL* at A Day of Dialog on Adult Performance Standards, sponsored by the Michigan Department of Career Development.

Lynda Terrill gave a workshop on *Communicative Activities for Beginning Level Adult ESL Classes* at the 7th Annual DC Literacy Center's Mini-Conference, Washington, DC (May).

Three NCLE staff members attended ALT 2000: Bridging the Digital Divide, Washington, DC (June). **Carol Van Duzer** and CAL colleagues Dorry Kenyon and Jill Wooddell gave a presentation on the development and pilot testing of a computer-assisted Basic English Skills Test (BEST) oral interview prototype (see article on page 4). **MaryAnn Florez** and **Lynda Terrill** facilitated a workshop on *Integrating Technology Into ESL Instruction Through Project-Based Learning.*

Miriam Burt, Lynda Terrill, and **Carol Van Duzer** traveled respectively to Minnesota, Colorado, and Texas to pilot the computer-assisted BEST prototype.

Perfect for Adult ESL Staff Development:

72

ERIC Digests about Adult ESL are available in full text on NCLE's Website.

www.cal.org/ncle

NCLE staff

Joy Peyton
Director

Miriam Burt
Associate Director

Carol Van Duzer
Teacher Training, Assessment, & Materials Development Coordinator

Dora Johnson
Acquisitions Coordinator

MaryAnn Florez
Technical Assistance & Website Coordinator

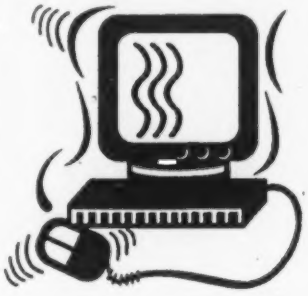
Lynda Terrill
Research & Program Associate

Lynn Fischer
Publications Assistant

NCLE*notes* is published twice yearly by the National Clearinghouse for ESL Literacy Education (NCLE) and is distributed free to individuals and organizations on NCLE's mailing list. *NCLEnotes* is also published on NCLE's website at www.cal.org/ncle.
Please address comments, suggestions, or material for consideration to
Miriam Burt, Editor
NCLEnotes
Center for Applied Linguistics
4646 40th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20016-1859
Email: ncle@cal.org

Resource Updates

NCLE has inaugurated a new feature on its website. **NCLE Resource Collections** brings together information and resources on topics of interest to those working in the field of adult ESL. The purpose of the collections is to provide a starting point for exploration—an overview of the reports, articles, organizations, and other resources that are currently available on specific topics, drawn from the Internet and conventional published sources.



The first Resource Collection focuses on teaching English to adults with learning disabilities. It provides background materials about learning disabilities from K-12 and adult education and gathers the limited resources that directly address adult ESL concerns. Articles, research reports, books, organizational websites, and newsletters are annotated. Links are provided where available. You can find this collection at http://www.cal.org/ncle/ResLD.htm.

Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) is now making the **Program Standards for Adult Education ESOL Programs** available to the public. Developed by a national task force of adult ESL program coordinators and instructors, the document defines the components of a quality adult education ESOL program and describes program quality indicators in eight areas: program structure, administration, and planning; curriculum; instruction; recruitment, intake, and orientation; retention and transition; assessment and learner gains; staffing, professional development, and staff evaluation; and support services.

Copies are $14.95 ($9.95 for TESOL members) plus shipping and handling. To order, contact TESOL Publications, PO Box 753, Waldorf, MD 20604-0753 (Tel: 301/638-4427 or 888/891-0041; Fax: 301/843-0159; Email: tesolpubs@tasco1.com)

The Center for Immigration Studies operates two informational listservs that focus on immigration policy issues. **CISNEWS** is a daily list of full-text news items, announcements, reviews, and questions about immigration issues. To join, go to http://mail.cis.org/guest/RemoteListSummary/CISNEWS and follow the directions for subscribing.

This Week in Immigration is a weekly summary of immigration news. In addition to lead paragraphs of the week's top 15 or 20 news stories, there are occasional announcements about new publications and upcoming events. To subscribe, go to http://mail.cis.org/guest/RemoteListSummary/THISWEEK.

Welcome to the USA: Trainer's Notebook is available from the Refugee Service Center at CAL. The notebook is designed to provide additional support to overseas Cultural Orientation (CO) programs that use the **Welcome to the USA video** and **guidebook**. Lesson notes and handouts (in English) corresponding to the five parts of the video constitute the main part of the notebook. For those using the video for continued cultural orientation once refugees reach the United States, some additional activities, suggestions, and expansions have been included.

For more information on how to obtain a copy of the notebook or video and guidebook, contact La Ditthavong at the Refugee Service Center (Tel: 202/362-0700; Fax: 202/362-3740; Email:-la@cal.org). The notebook is scheduled to be online this fall at the **Cultural Orientation Website** (http://www.culturalorientation.net).

How many times have you found yourself scrambling for new resources or ideas to use in teaching adult ESL? Do you feel like you spend as much time trying to locate information as you do putting it to use? Anna Silliman, NCLE advisory board member, and Abigail Tom, both experienced adult ESL teachers, have created a resource that helps teachers reduce both the anxiety and time spent in this process.

In **Practical Resources for Adult ESL: A Selection Guide to Materials for Adult ESL and ESL/ESOL Literacy**, the authors review over 260 titles that teachers, tutors, teacher trainers, and program administrators can use in adult English language instruction. Sections include teaching reading, speaking, listening, and grammar; classroom activities; instructional series; general methods and techniques; culture and community life; and literacy. There are also reviews of dictionaries, vocabulary texts, and multi-media resources, with information on publishers and distributors. The authors indicate the proficiency level of each resource where appropriate. Finally, a glossary of instructional approaches is added for those unfamiliar with ESL "jargon." Altogether, this book speaks to both novice and experienced adult ESL practitioners.

The Guide (2000; ISBN 1-882483-80-4) is available from Alta Book Center Publishers, 14 Adrian Court, Burlingame, CA 94010 (Tel: 800/258-2375 or 650/692-4654; Fax: 800/238-2329; Email: info@altaesl.com; WWW: http://www.altaesl.com).

The Book Shelf

The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures

By Anne Fadiman
(1997, The Noonday Press, ISBN 0-374-52564-1)

Reviewed by Miriam Burt

The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down is a nonfiction account of the Lees, a Hmong refugee family living in Merced, California, in the 1980s, and the U.S. doctors who try to treat Lia—the Lee's young daughter who has a seizure disorder—with disastrous results.

I read the book last fall and was transported back to St. Paul, Minnesota, where in 1980 and 1981, I taught Hmong students. I had never encountered adult learners like these.

Although they sat in the desks, the desks didn't own them, didn't define them, and didn't make them students. They didn't sit face forward, staring fixed at the teacher, copying down everything from the blackboard. Rather, they sat sideways, facing one another as they spoke. They only copied words or phrases when expressly directed to do so. It seemed as if their presence in the classroom was almost accidental. In short, they turned the classroom conventions upside down, because that was, in fact, just what they were—conventions, and they were conventions that had little or no meaning for these students. Yet they were at home with themselves, and at home with their not being at home in the classroom.

The chasm between *who* my Hmong students were, and *where* they were, couldn't have been wider.

This experience came back to me when I read *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down*. Anne Fadiman wrote the story without making Western civilization the easy villain. Both sides are portrayed as being well meaning, and indeed, both sides are. Unfortunately, the culture of Western science and medicine is so different from that of Hmong spirit life, there was no meeting place between the Lee family and the American doctors.

ESL practitioners should read this book and realize that even when all the characters have the best intentions, there is not necessarily a happy ending. We must strive, however, to communicate with one another, to find "where the edges meet," as Anne Fadiman says in the preface to this excellent book.

Stress *from page 1*

What Can Teachers Do?

Teachers can learn to recognize symptoms of mental illness or abrupt behavioral changes that disrupt the class.

Signals teachers identify from observation may include absences, withdrawal from participation, lack of attention, sleeping in class, frequent crying, behavioral problems, and change in progress. Symptoms often reported by students include headaches, backaches, stomachaches, insomnia, and excessive drinking of alcohol.

Teachers can discuss health and cultural content relevant to learners.

When refugees seek help from a medical doctor or a mental health professional, they often become uneasy when asked about details of their personal lives and backgrounds. In the ESL classroom, activities related to making appointments to see a doctor and then talking about health issues with the doctor, finding and keeping a job, negotiating transportation, and so forth are all natural components of the curriculum. These activities give learners opportunities to discuss issues of personal interest and concern with others and to solve problems related to survival, family, and employment.

Teachers can network.

They can collect information about community resources for dealing with refugee mental health. They can develop relationships with interested local mental health providers, find out how the local mental health system works, and identify community resources related to accessing help for cultural adjustment and mental health. Finally, they can make a decision about whether it is appropriate to contact resources, speak with other family members, or bring the situation to the attention of a resettlement agency or sponsor group, or to simply give the student the opportunity through classroom activities to discuss personal concerns.

The myriad needs that refugees bring to the classroom provide rich opportunities for learning. ESL teachers can be a critical link in a well-functioning team of providers helping refugees establish a new life that is both productive and satisfying.

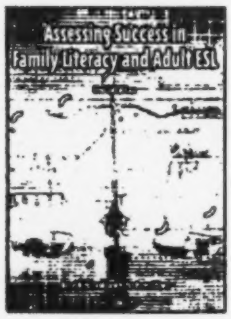
This article is excerpted from Mental Health and the Adult Refugee: The Role of the ESL Teacher, *by Myrna Ann Adkins and Barbara Sample, Spring Institute for International Studies; and Dina Birman, Georgetown University Medical Center. This ERIC Digest is available from NCLE's website (www.cal.org/ncle/digests/mental.htm) or by phone (202/362-0700 x200).*

About NCLE

http://www.cal.org/ncle/about.htm

When was NCLE established? Does NCLE produce materials on developing workplace ESL programs? Can NCLE help us evaluate our ESL program? If you don't know the answers to these questions, perhaps you should take a minute to visit ***About NCLE*** on the NCLE website. ***About NCLE*** provides an overview of who we are, what we do, and why we do it. You will learn about our history and funding, staff, advisors, collaborators, products, and services. It is a great way to find out how NCLE can become your number one source for information on adult ESL instruction.

The Latest From Delta Systems



Assessing Success in Family Literacy and Adult ESL is a revised edition of Daniel Holt's 1994 *Assessing Success in Family Literacy Projects*. This new 2000 edition, edited by Holt and NCLE staff member Carol Van Duzer, moves beyond family literacy to include all adult English language learner programs: lifeskills, workplace, citizenship, vocational, pre-academic, and others. The book shows program staff how to develop an effective evaluation plan through the integration of both standardized and alternative assessment approaches. Surveys, interviews, observation measures, and performance samples are discussed.

Assessing Success in Family Literacy and Adult ESL can be ordered from Delta Systems Co., Inc. (800-323-8270 or www.delta-systems.com).

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Publications Order Form

New ERIC Digests from NCLE

Mental Health and the Adult Refugee: The Role of the ESL Teacher

by Myrna Ann Adkins, Barbara Sample, and Dina Birman

Addresses both ESL and mental health issues of refugees and other adult immigrants, and explores three things ESL teachers can do to facilitate language and cultural learning while helping learners with mental health issues.

Multiple Intelligences: Theory and Practice in Adult ESL

by Mary Ann Christison and Deborah Kennedy

Looks at Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences and discusses its applicability to teaching adult English language learners.

Critical Literacy for Adult English Language Learners

by Carol Van Duzer and MaryAnn Florez

Describes the concept of critical literacy for both what is heard and what is read, and provides classroom activities and strategies for developing critical literacy skills in adults learning English.

ESL Instruction and Adults With Learning Disabilities

by Robin Schwarz and Lynda Terrill

Reviews research on adult ESL learners and learning disabilities (LD), suggests ways to identify and assess LD in learners, and looks at practical methods for instruction and teacher training.

Trauma and the Adult English Language Learner

by Janet Isserlis

Reviews key findings on the impact of trauma on behavior and how it effects learning, and discusses ways in which practitioners can respond appropriately and assist victims of trauma in the adult ESL classroom.

ERIC Digests (Free)*

- ❑ **Trauma and the Adult English Language Learner** (July 2000)
- ❑ **ESL Instruction and Adults With Learning Disabilities** (June 2000)
- ❑ **Mental Health and the Adult Refugee: The Role of the ESL Teacher** (December 1999)
- ❑ **Multiple Intelligences: Theory and Practice in Adult ESL** (December 1999)
- ❑ **Critical Literacy for Adult English Language Learners** (December 1999)
- ❑ **Poetry in the Adult ESL Classroom** (December 1999)
- ❑ **Native Language Literacy and Adult ESL Instruction** (December 1999)
- ❑ **Refugees as English Language Learners: Issues and Concerns** (September 1999)
- ❑ **Using Videos with Adult English Language Learners** (August 1999)
- ❑ **Reading and the Adult English Language Learner** (August 1999)

Send this form to: **Product Orders, NCLE/CAL, 4646 40th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20016-1859**

Name _____

Organization _____

Street _____

City/State/Zip _____

Country _____

❑ **Please check here and enclose old mailing label to revise or correct information.**

NCLE www.cal.org/ncle
National Clearinghouse for ESL Literacy Education
Center for Applied Linguistics
4646 40th Street NW
Washington DC 20016-1859

Forwarding Service Requested

Nonprofit Org
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit #1400
Silver Spring, MD

Her NCLE's Worth *from page 1*

degree (in ESOL) at Brown. I became the coordinator of the refugee program at the International Institute and worked there until 1992, when funding for refugee programs started to dwindle.

MB: So you moved to Vancouver?

JI: Actually I hadn't planned to stay in Vancouver. I was invited there in 1992 to work on a student action research project for five months. That project ended, but I stayed on for four years working on other projects, one particularly interesting one, the Rainmaker project. A team of adult educators at an elementary school worked with kids and their parents, teaching computer applications. We wanted the kids and their parents to see each other in school, and we wanted to help the mothers improve their English and computer skills. The project was important because it helped parents become a part of the larger school community and because it identified literacy as an integral piece of community development.

MB: Four years in Vancouver means you came back to the U.S. in 1996...

JI: Yes. And in 1997 I took the job as Project Director at the Literacy Resource Center at Brown University.

MB: And that's where you are now?

JI: That's where I am now. It was kind of hard to be not teaching after 17 years.

> ***"Language and culture are integrally connected to everything that happens in the world."***

Now I'm tutoring in a prison, keeping connected that way.

MB: And you're a NIFL fellow, too.

JI: Yes, I have a Literacy Leader fellowship through the National Institute for Literacy to look into the impacts of violence on learning. And along with staff at a women's shelter in Providence, I've recently been awarded a United Way Critical Issue grant to develop literacy work with shelter staff and residents. I've been volunteering there with literacy tutoring, and now I'll be training counselors on how literacy and violence are related, helping them have a better sense how to support the women in their educational endeavors.

MB: You've been in the field of ESOL literacy education for 20 years now. What has kept you here so long?

JI: I want to keep learning and growing, and I can't imagine doing anything else. Language and culture are so integrally connected to everything else that happens in the world. They are so much a part of race and power and other social issues.

MB: Is there anything else you'd like to say to *NCLEnotes?*

JI: In the field of literacy, especially ESOL literacy, as we do our work we have to be always mindful of power relationships. We need to remember the ways in which we as teachers have power over students and the ways in which we don't have power (such as with funders). This morning as I walked to work I asked myself what would be better for adult learners because I'd come to work today. I think that's a question we need to ask ourselves regularly.

Vol. 9, No. 2 • Winter 2000/2001

NCLEnotes

NATIONAL CENTER FOR ESL LITERACY EDUCATION www.cal.org/ncle

Civics for Adult Immigrants

Teaching about U.S. history and government and preparing immigrants to pass the U.S. citizenship test have been part of adult immigrant education for more than a century. Now, designated monies are being provided to states and individual programs for English Literacy/Civics Education. Because nearly 50% of all adults enrolled in U.S. Department of Education funded education courses are English language learners, this program will have a significant national impact.

What is civics education?

Civics education is a broad term that includes instruction to help immigrants gain citizenship; to teach U.S. history and culture, including lessons on diversity and multiculturalism; and to facilitate adult learners' active participation in their communities.

Bringing civics into the classroom

Adult immigrants often express interest in American culture, government, and history. While the complexity of the English language used in instruction varies from level to level, significant content can be imparted at all levels as learners are acquiring English.

Beginning levels

Practitioners can help literacy learners understand basic concepts about community, government, and history while doing hands-on activities, pre-reading activities, and activities that help them develop fine motor skills needed for writing. Learners can make collages representing their community with pictures cut from magazines, alphabetize state names or label maps, practice sight word recognition of high office holders or community institutions such as *library*

Continued on page 6

David Red, Coordinator of Adult ESL Instruction

His NCLE's Worth

In this issue of NCLEnotes, *we speak with David Red, Coordinator of Adult ESL Instruction, Fairfax County, Virginia.*

Miriam Burt: David, how did you get started in adult ESL instruction?

David Red: I starting teaching adult learners in 1978 in Kathmandu, Nepal, working at the English Language Institute of the U.S. Information Service. I stayed there until 1983 when I came back to the United States to pursue graduate work at the University of Texas at Austin.

Continued on page 8

inside

News Notes ____ 2
Resource Updates ____ 4
The Book Shelf ____ 5
NCLE Publications ____ 7

From the Director...

We are pleased to announce that NCLE will now be the National Center for ESL Literacy Education. This change in name from *Clearinghouse* to *Center* better reflects our work and the range of services that we provide. These include technical assistance to programs; professional development of program staff; the writing and producing of books, reports, and papers; and the development of online resource collections on a number of key topics. We will continue to engage in information analysis and synthesis, question answering, and collection of documents related to adult ESL for the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) database.

Over the last 11 years, NCLE has become the national center for ESL literacy education, but we will always be NCLE—knowledgeable, friendly, and ready to help.

All of us at NCLE wish you the very best for a productive and enjoyable 2001.

Joy Kreeft Peyton
Director

NCLE is an adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse at the Center for Applied Linguistics CAL in Washington, DC.

News Notes

BEST Gets Computerized

Adult ESL practitioners from across the country and staff at the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) have recently been busy developing test items for C-BEST, a new computer-assisted oral assessment. C-BEST is based on the Basic English Skills Test (BEST) oral interview, developed during the early 1980s to meet the need in adult education programs for a reliable assessment of adult English learners' oral proficiency and literacy skills. In the late 1990s, CAL was awarded a contract by the U.S. Department of Education to create a computer-assisted version of the test.

C-BEST will allow learners to show what they can do in English in a shorter time frame than the original BEST oral assessment. It will still be administered as a face-to-face oral interview, but the test administrator will enter scores into a computer. The computer will select test questions and adapt the difficulty level of the questions as the scores are entered. C-BEST will be able to distinguish performance levels over the full range of English proficiency levels.

This spring, CAL will begin field testing the C-BEST items. During the next year and a half, reliability and validity studies will be performed, and a new print version of the test will be piloted and field tested.

C-BEST is expected to be available on CD-ROM in the fall of 2002 and will include training materials for test administrators. More information on the BEST and updates on the test development process are posted on the project Web page at http://www.cal.org/best/.

The 2001 Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) convention will take place in St. Louis, Missouri, February 27 – March 3. NCLE staff will be giving a number of presentations on issues in adult ESL.

- ESL in Adult Education: Developing Professionals
- Learning to Keep on Learning
- Empowering Children and Parents in Family Literacy
- Research on Adult ESOL Practice
- Facilitating Progress in Adults with Learning Disabilities
- Adult English Learners and the National Literacy Summit
- Professional Development Resources for Adult ESL Practitioners
- Low Proficiency Adults' Language Learning Strategies
- Development of the Adaptive Computer-Assisted Oral Interview

NCLE staff will be available at the CAL booth in the Exhibit Hall. For descriptions and times of NCLE presentations, see NCLE's Web site: www.cal.org/ncle/tesol.htm. We look forward to seeing you at TESOL 2001!

Adult Literacy Action Agenda Is Launched

The National Coalition for Literacy released *From the Margins to the Mainstream* on September 8, 2000, International Literacy Day. The publication, an action agenda for adult education, grew out of the National Literacy Summit, held in February 2000 and organized by a committee of members from the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning and Literacy, National Council of State Directors for Adult Education, National Institute for Literacy, and the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education. The Summit was an effort to develop a vision and action agenda for adult language and literacy programming and instruction in the United States. (See *NCLEnotes* Summer 2000 for more information about the Summit.)

After the Summit, NCLE staff worked with members of the Adult Education Interest Section (AEIS) of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) to write a paper articulating a vision and action agenda for adult English language learners. NCLE Director Joy Peyton and AEIS leaders will hold a discussion at the annual TESOL convention (February 27–March 3) that will focus on the goals and action steps delineated in the paper and identify key policy issues and the next steps for the field.

Connect and Get Answers—on NIFL-ESL

Have you ever had a question about teaching or resources and wondered what it would be like to have access to over 800 adult ESL practitioners for answers? You can find out when you subscribe to NIFL-ESL, an online discussion list sponsored by the National Institute for Literacy (NIFL) and facilitated by NCLE. Following is an excerpt from a recent discussion.

▽▽▽

Does anyone have information about the benefits or rationale for reading aloud to adult learners? We are implementing "read aloud" reading ... with the adult learners at my center. I have read about the benefits for children but haven't been able to find information for adults.

Andrea O'Brien
Lawrence Adult Learning Center
Lawrence, MA

[My father] read aloud to us—in a number of languages. I learned a great deal about the process and joy of reading by being read to as a child. I learned lots of language and many nuances of speech. I recommend reading aloud to adults in every session. Students should have copies of the articles as you read. It trains the ear to listen to English phonemics and to the rhythm of the language—its prosody. It creates a bond between teacher and student. It also gives a great deal of information to students.

Sherry Migdail
Educational Consultant
Chevy Chase, MD

Reading aloud to students material [that is] meant to be read aloud, such as books for young children, greeting cards, and plays, is enjoyable and provides an opportunity to hear the language in a natural way as well as participate in following an idea or story. Before students read aloud, they should practice to reach fluency. Students enjoy learning to read books and stories and then taking them home to read to their children. This is an authentic literacy experience.

Myra K. Baum
Coordinator of Professional Development
New York City Board of Education

My [beginning level] adults greatly enjoy both my reading to them and their read-aloud activities ... I also read short children's books to them, [which generate] good listening, discussion, and informal pronunciation exercises, as well as giving students wider exposure to the language. It's fun, too.

Dottie Shattuck
Central Piedmont Community College
Charlotte, NC

▽▽▽

You can subscribe to the NIFL-ESL discussion list or peruse some of the past discussions at

www.nifl.gov/lincs/discussions/nifl-esl/english_second_language.html

Sign Up for NCLE News!

Do you want to stay current on all the latest at NCLE? We will email you and let you know about new publications, upcoming activities, and the latest Web features. But we won't be a nuisance! We'll send you a message every three months—no more!

To sign up, send a blank e-mail message to

join-nclenews@caltalk.cal.org

NCLE staff

Joy Kreeft Peyton
Director

Miriam Burt
Associate Director

MaryAnn Florez
Assistant Director & Web Site Coordinator

Carol Van Duzer
Adult ESL Services Coordinator

Dora Johnson
Research & Program Associate

Lynda Terrill
Acquisitions Coordinator

Lynn Fischer
Editorial Assistant

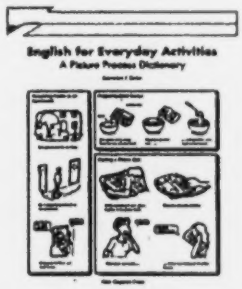
Dawn Flanagan
Program Secretary

NCLEnotes is published twice yearly by the National Center for ESL Literacy Education (NCLE) and is distributed free to individuals and organizations on NCLE's mailing list. *NCLEnotes* is also published on NCLE's Web site at www.cal.org/ncle.
Please address comments, suggestions, or material for consideration to

Miriam Burt, Editor
miriam@cal.org –or–
Lynn Fischer, Assistant Editor
lynnf@cal.org
NCLEnotes
Center for Applied Linguistics
4646 40th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20016-1859

Resource Updates

English for Everyday Activities: A Picture Process Dictionary



Lawrence J. Zwier, New Readers Press, 1999 (800-448-8878 www.newreaderspress.com)

This innovative picture dictionary offers vocabulary, phrases, and sentences in the context of everyday activities, such as using a telephone answering machine, making dinner, renting and watching a video, using an ATM, taking a car for repairs, and shopping for groceries. Key vocabulary, idioms, and concepts are identified for each activity. The series focuses on verbs as the main building block for communication, and verbs in simple present, past, and future tenses are used.

While the vocabulary and structures are more appropriate for intermediate level learners, the clarity and practicality of the pictures and topics make the series applicable—with some adaptation—for beginning levels. Components include a student book (available in both English and English/Spanish); a student book and cassette or CD, which provides spoken forms in English of all captions and dialogues; a workbook; a teacher's guide; and a listening activity book with cassette/CD. (Each component can be purchased separately.)

New Immigrants in the United States: Background for Second Language Educators

Edited by Sandra Lee McKay and Sau-Ling Cynthia Wong, Cambridge Language Teaching Library, Cambridge University Press, 2000 (800-872-7423)

This book offers a social and educational perspective on language diversity in the United States by looking at linguistic, political, economic, social, and cultural aspects of various immigrant groups. An overview of both the historical and contemporary experiences of immigrants in the United States is presented, and current demographics on English language learners is provided. Adult ESL teachers will benefit from this valuable resource.

Learning Computers, Speaking English

Steve Quann and Diana Satin, University of Michigan Press, 2000 (www.press.umich.edu/esl/)

This textbook, which targets intermediate-level English language learners, combines grammar presentation and basic computer instruction. In eight units, language objectives—commands and requests, present perfect verbs, comparative and superlative adjectives, and conditionals—are taught along side computer basics, such as computer hardware, basic commands, keyboarding, and formatting. Each unit includes activities that support both the language and computer objectives.

An introductory section for teachers offers suggestions for adapting the lessons for higher or lower proficiency levels. A computer disk of learner activities accompanies the book. (Lessons are based on Microsoft WordPad, which is available in Windows 95 or higher.)

Do My ESOL Students Have Learning Disabilities?

Dianne F. Shewcraft and Eileen L. Witkop, 1998 (Available from the Western MA YALD Project, 269 First Street, Pittsfield, MA 01201; 413-499-9531. Also available from the ERIC database later this year.)

Adult ESL teachers and tutors are often frustrated when they are unable to help a student make expected progress in learning English. Reasons that learners don't make progress vary and may include lack of education in the learner's native country, current or past trauma, or work and family problems. Sometimes, however, a learner doesn't make progress because of a learning disability (LD). This manual, produced by the Young Adults with Learning Disabilities (YALD) Project, offers practical advice for ESL practitioners who are concerned that a student may have a learning disability. The manual defines learning disabilities and describes specific types, lists characteristics that may indicate a learning disability, discusses how to approach the LD learner, provides ways of screening for learning disabilities (a screening kit is included), and recommends specific classroom strategies.

The Book Shelf

Grandfather's Journey (1993), *Tea with Milk* (1999), and *Tree of Cranes* (1991)

Written and Illustrated by Allen Say
Published by Houghton Mifflin

Reviewed by Miriam Burt

Many people feel that the Hispanic immigrants entering the United States today are unique in that they come and go frequently, if not freely, across the border from their countries to the United States.

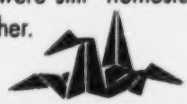
These immigrants are compared unfavorably to immigrants of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, who, it is believed, came here and stayed here, rooting themselves firmly and finally in the soil of the new country. This is not true, however.

In *Literacy and Language Diversity in the United States* (1996), Terry Wiley points out that the door, if not revolving, has always swung both ways. Many of the immigrants who came to the United States in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, later immigrated back to their home countries. Some of them returned to the United States, and some did not.

Reading some children's literature about Japanese immigrants at the turn of the 20th century brought this home to me. Allen Say writes from his own experience as the child of a Japanese mother and a Chinese father. It is the Japanese connection that he focuses on in his books: *Grandfather's Journey, Tea with Milk*, and *Tree of Cranes*. *Grandfather's Journey* is the story of Say's grandfather in America in the early 1900s, his return to Japan to marry a Japanese woman, his subsequent return to the United States, and his final return to Japan. World War II prevents Say's grandfather from going back to the United States again. Whenever Grandfather is in one country, Say writes, he is homesick for the other country. Say feels the same way, having also lived in both Japan and the United States.

Tea with Milk tells of May's (Say's mother) experience in coming to Japan as a young girl, because her parents (the grandparents from the first book) were homesick for Japan and had returned. May had been born in California and experienced extreme difficulties in fitting in to her parent's land of birth. In the *Tree of Cranes*, also set in Japan, the young Say himself sees his mother's enduring homesickness for the United States when she uproots a small tree in their back yard, pots it, and then decorates it with folded paper cranes and lighted candles—to celebrate Christmas.

Say's ancestors were in the United States by choice and not through a catastrophe or hardship situation. Yet, even though they were able to return to their own countries after having immigrated to this country, they were still "homesick" for one country while they were in the other.



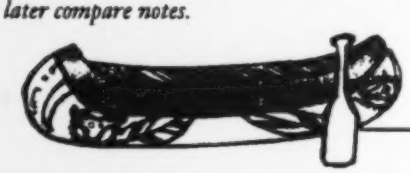
If I were teaching a class of adult English language learners, I would use these books and would combine language learning with U.S. cultural content. We would discuss the pictures. For example, we would talk about the picture in *Tea with Milk* where the westernized May is having lunch at a restaurant with her future husband and how their clothes, facial expressions, and body language contrast with that of the traditional couple in the foreground of the picture. We would discuss the vocabulary. I might share my family's immigration stories with the learners. If comfortable, they would share theirs orally or in writing. If they weren't comfortable with this, they could talk or write about Say's characters. Learners might want to talk or write about what is different in this country—what they like about these differences, and what they don't like. I would use the books with intermediate level, perhaps even with high beginning learners.

Whether or not you plan to use these books with adult English language learners, I recommend that you read them. The prose is direct and clear, the pictures are beautiful and evocative, and the themes presented are timeless and universal. And who knows? Reading the books may spur you to look into your own family's immigration history, and you might find a pattern of coming and going that surprises you. That's what happened to me.▼

Civics from page 1

The First Thanksgiving

The teacher writes two paragraphs about the first Thanksgiving, controlling the vocabulary, structure, and content of each paragraph to address the English level of each learner. Partner A reads the first paragraph to Partner B. Partner B has the same text minus certain words or phrases. (The teacher has deleted certain structural words such as conjunctions, adverbs, or auxiliary verbs; or content words such as pilgrims, Massasoit, and Plymouth.) Partner B listens, perhaps asking for clarification, and writes the missing words. Then Partner B reads the second paragraph to Partner A who must listen, understand, and write a different set of words or phrases. Learners absorb the civics content and practice language skills as they read silently and aloud, listen, write, and later compare notes.



Integrating Content with Language

One activity that integrates cultural information with language development is a simple matching exercise, where famous Americans are matched with their descriptions. Learners can create their own matching exercises and exchange them with other learners in their class or program to complete.

How much do you know about us? Draw a line to connect the names with the descriptions. (Answers will be given in the next issue of *NCLEnotes* and on the NCLE Web site at www.cal.org/ncle/about.htm.)

and *INS*, and match pictures of institutions or people with their names or titles.

Intermediate levels

Teachers can devise information-gap activities about American culture and history, such as "The First Thanksgiving" (see sidebar).

Using the World Wide Web, learners—alone, in pairs, or in small groups—can research different aspects of the local government and conduct a debate or give a short oral presentation to the class. Topics on a local government Web site might include the fall leaf collection schedule, bicycle safety rules, or an explanation of the local government system. Learners can choose issues that are important to them, access the information, hone technology skills, and be active participants in their community while they improve their reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills.

Advanced levels

Advanced English language learners are usually concerned about using language in complex or academic contexts. Attending school board meetings, inviting local officials to speak to the class, and volunteering in community organizations are ways learners can participate in the community while using and improving their communication skills. Writing letters to the editor, e-mailing members of Congress or the President, and researching and writing an essay about an aspect of American history or culture are ways to expand literacy skills.▼

This article is excerpted from Civics Education for Adult English Language Learners, *by Lynda Terrill, National Center for ESL Literacy Education.*

For further information on civics education for adult immigrant learners or to access a civics education resource list, visit NCLE's Web site at www.cal.org/ncle.

NCLE Staff Match

Joy Peyton	She lived in England and now coordinates a volunteer ESL program at her church.
Miriam Burt	She tutored adult English learners with AmeriCorps and taught computer classes to teen parents.
MaryAnn Florez	She has lived, worked, and taught English in Europe and Asia; her adoptive daughter was born in Russia.
Carol Van Duzer	She speaks fluent Spanish and did seminal work on dialogue journals and English language learners.
Lynda Terrill	She has lived abroad and speaks fluent French; her family often hosts internationals working in Washington, DC, on professional internships.
Dora Johnson	A naturalized U.S. citizen, she speaks five languages—including English like a native speaker, although she didn't come to the United States until she was an adult.
Lynn Fischer	Her first work with nonnative speakers of English was a teaching job near the Navajo Reservation in Arizona.
Dawn Flanagan	She likes to put an artistic touch on NCLE publications and has taught adult ESL in the New York area.

Publications Order Form

New ERIC Digests from NCLE

Dialogue Journals: Interactive Writing to Develop Language and Literacy

by Joy Kreeft Peyton

What are the benefits of using dialogue journal writing with adult English language learners? What are the challenges? How can I manage the time and paperwork it will generate? This Q&A answers these questions and offers suggestions for interactive writing in the adult ESL classroom.

Online Professional Development for Adult ESL Educators

by William B. Hawk

Professional growth is important to most educators. This Q&A discusses the benefits and challenges of online professional development, surveys the range of options available to adult ESL teachers and tutors, and provides guidance in exploring and evaluating these options.

Finding and Evaluating Adult ESL Resources on the World Wide Web

by MaryAnn Cunningham Florez

Looking for a more efficient way to find resources on the Web? This Q&A examines the functions of various search tools, explains how to create and execute search strategies, and shows how to evaluate the resources your search has yielded.

Civics Education for Adult English Language Learners

by Lynda Terrill

English language learning and civics education have been paired for more than a century. This Q&A discusses the events that have shaped civics education, defines key terms, and describes approaches and activities that integrate language learning with civics content.

So, What Do You Think?

The NCLE Web site continues to grow and change. It now offers full-text documents (ERIC Digests, Q&As, *Research Agenda for Adult ESL*), Frequently Asked Questions, NCLE Resource Collections, bibliographies, annotated links, and an annotated list of ESL publishers. Our goal is to provide you with a resource-rich site that is responsive to your needs as an adult ESL professional.

To do this better, we need your opinions. Visit the NCLE site at **www.cal.org/ncle**, click on **Share Your Comments**, and let us know what you think!

Recent ERIC Digests and Q&As (Free)

- ❑ **Dialogue Journals: Interactive Writing to Develop Language and Literacy** (Dec 2000)
- ❑ **Civics Education for Adult English Language Learners** (Nov 2000)
- ❑ **Finding and Evaluating Adult ESL Resources on the World Wide Web** (Oct 2000)
- ❑ **Online Professional Development for Adult ESL Educators** (Sept 2000)
- ❑ **Trauma and the Adult English Language Learner** (July 2000)
- ❑ **ESL Instruction and Adults with Learning Disabilities** (June 2000)
- ❑ **Mental Health and the Adult Refugee: The Role of the ESL Teacher** (Dec 1999)
- ❑ **Multiple Intelligences: Theory and Practice in Adult ESL** (Dec 1999)
- ❑ **Critical Literacy for Adult English Language Learners** (Dec 1999)
- ❑ **Poetry in the Adult ESL Classroom** (Dec 1999)

Send this form to:
Product Orders, NCLE/CAL, 4646 40th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20016-1859

Name _____

Organization _____

Street _____

City/State/Zip _____

Country _____

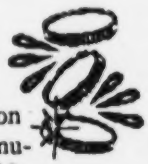
❑ **Please check here and enclose old mailing label to revise or correct information.**

NCLE www.cal.org/ncle
National Center for ESL Literacy Education
Center for Applied Linguistics
4646 40th Street NW
Washington DC 20016-1859

Forwarding Service Requested

Nonprofit Org
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit #1400
Silver Spring, MD

His NCLE's Worth *from page 1*



MB: When you received your PhD, did you come to DC?

DR: Yes. In 1989, I came to Washington, DC, to work at the Foreign Service Institute as language training supervisor for South Asian languages.

MB: What did you do in this position?

DR: Besides having responsibility for the curriculum and teacher training, I worked with instructors to develop reading materials for Americans learning to read Urdu, Nepali, and Hindi texts.

MB: Did you stay involved with adult ESL instruction during this time?

DR: Yes, I have volunteered at the Literacy Council of Northern Virginia since I first came to Washington. First I tutored adult students, then I became a member of the group that provides training for tutors five times a year. Now I am the training director there.

MB: And you have also recently become the Coordinator of Adult ESL Instruction for Fairfax County, Virginia.

DR: Very recently! I began the job in January 2001.

MB: What are you looking forward to in this new job?

DR: I'm eager to work with an already outstanding program. We currently serve large populations from Central America. It will be interesting as we work to meet the demands of new immigrant populations from Europe, Asia, and Africa. I hope to explore ways that Fairfax County can use technology wisely to assist adults learning English. Finally, I want to concentrate on literacy development and to make that a primary focus. Learners need to have strong reading and writing skills as well as listening and speaking fluency in order to be successful in today's society.

MB: Speaking of today's society, what changes have you seen in the field since you began working with adult ESL?

DR: I've seen two major changes. The first is in curriculum. When I started teaching in 1978, it was the tail end of the audio-lingual approach. We teachers struggled to make our instruction meaningful for learners and to take them beyond the grammar drills that dominated the textbooks we were saddled with. Then in the 1980s, functional notional approaches and the task-based approach arrived on the scene. After this we saw a shift to learner-centered instruction and even instruction that focused solely on communication, to the exclusion of form.

MB: So where are we now?

DR: Now I think we're in a balance. Communication is important, but there is a healthy balance between form and content.

MB: What is the other change you've noticed?

DR: There is much more professionalism in the field. When I started in the late '70s, you could walk off the street and get a job in adult ESL instruction without any training or preparation. Now there is much more of a focus on training. It is less likely that all you need to teach English is to be a native speaker.

MB: David, do you have any final words for *NCLEnotes*?

DR: There needs to be more research that directly involves teachers—classroom-based practitioner research, action research that focuses on the literacy process and on how adults learn to read English as a second language. There are some things we know and much more we don't. Teacher research can and should be used to inform the field.▼